LIVE NOTES ABOUT THE NEWEST BOOKS AND THEIR MAKERS

A TALE OF REVERSES---ROMANTIC AUTOBIOGRAPHY AND AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL ROMANCE.

THOSE who read a year or two ago, "The Tribulations of a Princess," and some time before that "The Martyrdom of an Empress," will be interested beyond doubt in the author's third book, "A Doffed Coronet," which is even more autobiographical than either of the other two. The writer is thus far anonymous, and according to the ending of her latest work, is living at present in a country house somewhere near New York, as the wife of an English gentleman of noble family, formerly a member of the British diplomatic service.

It may be added that her earlier books afford the information that she was the daughter of a Breton nobleman, who married a Russian lady of uncertain temper and no domestic virtues, and that her first marriage was one of those tragedies too common in countries where young girls are disposed of without their consent to elderly roues, under the form of marriage. In the second marriage, however, we find a genuine love match, the story of which is told in this book.

An Irritating Device.

The opening chapters deal with conditions in Egypt just after the Arabi Pasha rebellion, and diplomats and officials of all nationalities figure in the narrative. These folk are designated by the initial and last letter of the name, a device somewhat irritating when repeated as often as it necessarily is in such a book. The atmosphere is one of continuous intrigue and subterfuge and plot and counterplot, and while doubtless fascinating to anyone who knows all the ins and outs of Oriental diplomacy, is likely to prove a trifle bewildering to the average reader. However, this is not intended to be a novel, and the brilliancy of the style makes up for most other defects.

The heroine, variously known to her intimates as "Margot," "Muzzi," and "Pussy," is one of those vivid, fascinating and individual creatures found now and then in the many-sided life of European courts, and not infrequently the result of a mixture of blood. Her character is brought out even more clearly in the last chapters of the book, in which fortune takes her with her husband to America, and owing to some unexpected reverses they are suddenly obliged to adapt themselves to the hitherto unknown conditions of poverty. These chapters are a mixture of the ludicrous and the pathetic, with some extravagances of narration which read a good deal like fiction, but are more or less entertaining, all the same.

Pink Gowns and Pepper.

We find the perplexed but courageous wife of the ex-diplomat striving to reduce the kitchen of a New York apartment to order, arrayed in a pink velvet tea gown with a bath towel for an apron. We behold her sallying forth to attempt marketing for the first time, and ordering five pounds of pepper, to the amazement of the grocer, who inquired if she wanted it for packing away her winter gowns. We see her, when the funds of the family exchequer have completely disappeared, painting menu cards at $2 a dozen to pay for the bread and butter of the household; cooking, sweeping, washing, scrubbing, dressmaking, all with illimitable courage and equally complete inexperience.

The picture of the aristocrat reduced to poverty, with no preparation and no training for its inevitable expedients, has, perhaps, never been better painted. As a rule, in the novels there are one or two convenient old servants who do all the work, and contrive to keep up the appearance of gentility for the family on marvelously small incomes, but here, as in real life, the servitors fail to appear, and the lesson has to be learned at infinite cost and trouble.

An Egyptian Royal Wedding.

The story of the life in Egypt which preceded this picturesque but most unpleasant tumble into the cold world, reads more like a piece of the Arabian Nights than like truth, but its graphic descriptions and forceful appeals to the imagination are beyond the abilities of the average writer of fiction. Extravagant or not, it is fascinating.

The book will form an interesting supplement to the Egyptian fiction recently produced by Sir Gilbert Parker, A. E. W. Mason, and others. Jewels, ancient palaces, fountains, wonderful gardens full of mysterious odors, Oriental harems—of all these things the unknown author of these reminiscences discourses with easy familiarity and freedom. An example of her unusual experiences is to be found in the description of certain fetes attending the wedding of a member of the Egyptain royal family. This spectacle is one which, as she states, few European women have been allowed to see, and the picture which she gives of it is luxuriant in an almost Oriental wealth of words and phrases. It is in part as follows:

"On the first day devoted to the wedding feasts, on leaving my carriage, I was conducted by the chief eunuch through a magnificent garden, a place of luxuriant verdure, bubbling fountains, which was illumined by thousands of pink and pale green lamps, swinging from the trees like strange, ideal fruit, bordering the parterres with their capricious festoon, and cincturing the palace, which seemed hung from top to bottom with strings of live jewels, at once soft, brilliant and chaste in their unspeakably delicious mellowness. The path I followed was strewn with powdered sea shells and bordered on either side by rare plants in full bloom, filling the air with exquisite perfume. It was a rather sultry but clear night, the sky was radiant and the luster of a great, white moon, hanging like a gigantic pearl in the deep blue overhead, lit the trellised rose walks leading to the marble palace and cast into bold relief against the deep shadow of palm and ilex the many feathery jets d'eau crowning flower-filled basins of alabaster with whispering coolness

A Scene in Fairyland.

"My guide and I soon reached an open loggia, with floor and columns of white marble. One side opened to the balmy air, the other was richly draped with wonderful silken banners and hangings embroidered with gold and silver devices, flowers and fruit. Everywhere arborescent ferns in large, square tubs of bronze filled in the spaces between the columns, which were themselves garlanded with jasmine, roses and a sort of highly odorous pink wistaria I had never seen before. Here eunuchs, attired in gala uniforms, were waiting to escort me to a huge and superbly decorated reception-room, where a galaxy of beautiful white slaves clad in brilliantly picturesque Eastern costumes and literally covered with jewels, took charge of me, and, passing me, so to speak, from one to the other, ushered me into a yet more splendid salon, where dancing girls, tambourine or castanets in hand, performed the graceful gyrations of a true Oriental dance.

"On and on I was conducted through an interminable series of apartments gorgeously decorated in Turkish style with gold-diapered walls glittering enough to dazzle the eyes of a hawk. Each room shaded off in color into the next, embracing every imaginable tint of the prism; there was blue-gold, green-gold, red-gold, violet-gold, orange-gold, yellow-gold, indigo-gold, all shimmering like waves of fluctuating electricity, and I am bound to say that this unique style of mural decoration far surpassed in beauty anything which the richest imagination might suggest.

A Well-Preserved Woman of Thirty.

"The last of this astonishing suite was occupied by the mother of the bride, a remarkably well-preserved woman of thirty, clothed in transparent gauze scintillating with gems, whose jet black tresses, intermingled with strands of pearl, were crowned by a scarlet, thickly-pailleted fez, the long, dark blue tassel of which hung over her left shoulder. Here all manner of extraordinary refreshments were served—drinks of every imaginable color, sherbets in filigree cups of gold, fruits reposing on heaped-up rose petals, confections which Oriental hands alone can prepare, and bonbons too pretty by far to be broken up and eaten.

"Suddenly the curtains of a lofty, arched door were drawn aside and the bride appeared, slowly walking upon a broad strip of cloth of gold which slaves, moving backward, unrolled under her tiny feet as she advanced. On each side of this royal carpet marched a double row of eunuchs bearing tall silver candelabra wherein pink candles burned, and twenty-four young girls, wearing costumes of gold-striped white satin, followed, and surrounded the fiancee, holding above her head an arched canopy formed entirely of fresh orange blossoms and silvered leaves.

Amid Showers of Gold.

"Meanwhile other girls, standing on little inlaid benches or tripods, showered upon this fair procession, and also upon the guests, handful after handful of tiny gold coins struck expressly for the occasion, and which were carried away by those present as charming little mementos of that auspicious ceremony. With well-nigh military precision the guests fell into step behind the bridal cortege, and, forming into a triple line, followed it from salon to salon until a great hall, furnished and upholstered in white and silver, and profusely decorated with orange, lemon, and myrtle blossoms, was reached. On a raised platform were three white satin chairs, upon which the bride, her mother, and the bridegroom's mother took their places.

"The bride was an exceedingly lovely girl, almost a baby in years, with velvety black eyes, soft as a gazelle's, a little rosebud of a mouth, a skin like the innermost heart of a tea-rose, and blue-black hair, as fine as fils de la vierge, falling in opulent splendor from beneath a diadem of diamonds of fabulous value. A long tunic of heaviest shimmering brocade, embroidered with silver and pearls, showed off the perfect contours of her form, and wide trousers of soft satin, half concealed by the long ends of a broad silken sash worked with jewels, allowed her absurdly delicate ankles and narrow, deliciously arched feet to be freely admired. The latter were incased in babouches, which appeared to be made entirely of diamonds and rubies. From her shoulders hung a white velvet mantle, lined with cloth of silver and provided with an immense train, which was carried behind her, when she walked by six maidens clad in pure white."

So much for the millinery of the occasion. Then follows a description of the various ceremonies attending the presentation of a certain betrothal jewel. Several of the songs are quoted in translation. There is also an account of the reception of the bride at her husband's palace, which is still more characteristic of the East in its barbaric splendor and richness of symbolism.

Ceremony and Symbolism.

Another extraordinary adventure of the heroine occurred on the occasion of her visit, with a party of friends, to the palace of a nobleman living near Alexandria. The party took refuge in a grotto during a storm, and finding a passage leading from this retreat, explored it, with the result that they found themselves in the catacombs of Alexandria and saw some sights recalling the flights of fancy to be found in the books of Rider Haggard.

An interview between the heroine and the Khedive, regarding the suspected treachery of certain members of the latter's household, the discovery, by the heroine, of a magnificent necklace of jewels belonging to the Khedive, lying on her husband's library table quite unprotected, the attempted poisoning of the heroine by an Egyptian official, and her counterplot against her husband's secretary, who was revealing diplomatic secrets to the enemy, are among the minor incidents of the Egyptian half of the book. (New York: Harper & Bros.)

"THE WOMAN WHO TOILS" WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT

ONE of the remarkable books of the season is "The Woman Who Toils," by Mrs. John Van Vorst and Marie Van Vorst. Appearing first as a series of articles on the conditions of women's work in various manufacturing cities, it attracted much attention from the unique character of the social experiment described and from the graphic force of the narrative itself.

Of late it has been once more brought into unusual notice from the fact that President Roosevelt has written a letter to one of the authors warmly commending the book and touching especially on a certain phase of the problem which it discusses. This letter is reprinted as a preface to the collected sketches.

For the benefit of those who have not already read the book in its serial form, it may be briefly stated that two women of wealth and social position, having become interested in labor questions as they affect working women, conceived the idea of making a personal investigation in the disguise of working girls seeking employment. This they did, in a Pittsburg pickle factory, in a New York mill town, in Lynn shoe factories, in a Chicago clothing shop and in the cotton mills of South Carolina.

Two Views of Factory Life.

They did not pursue their investigations together, but each took certain towns as her field, and wrote of them. The book is composed of the two sets of sketches. It is certainly the most notable contribution to sociological literature of its kind since Prof. Wyckoff's books appeared several years ago.

It may be argued, and with justice, that any view of working people taken from the outside—and the view of a born outsider is always from the outside—must necessarily be imperfect. The man or woman born in the non-working class, taking up the life of the toiler merely as an experiment, cannot, as repeated trials have proved, enter into the feelings and experiences of that life and describe them as they are. The description is inevitably colored either by optimism or pessimism.

The narrator, bringing to unaccustomed tasks the trained intelligence of generations of leisure, may find them less intolerable than the narrower intelligence; or, which is more likely, the sensitive nerves of the investigator, revolting at the squalor of the conditions under which work is done, may lead him to the conclusion that the workingman is a creature of a lower order, because he also does not evidently suffer from these conditions.

We often hear the careless comment, "Oh, these people are not like us. They don't mind such things." Sometimes it is true. There is a state of mind and body too callous and stupid to be moved by bad smells, filthy surroundings, disagreeable tasks, or any kind of moral or physical ugliness.

If there were not in human nature a power of adaptability; if the human love of life did not prove stronger than adverse influences in the environment, the laboring classes of more than one generation would have been snuffed out long ago.

The Tragedies of Labor.

But in spite of everything there are individuals here and there among those who toil, whose feelings are as sensitive, whose systems are as delicate as those of the average aristocrat; and the crushing down of these finer intelligences is one of the tragedies of labor.

The present work is notable in that it recognizes, as perhaps no former work has done, the existence of such finer feelings among those whose whole environment seems formed to destroy them. It is also worthy of attention as being an honest and earnest attempt to find out the truth, without bias of personal prejudice or class feeling; and such work is not too plentiful, even in this enlightened age.

The best point of the book, however, is its style. The work has been done with a force and fineness which is calculated to make intelligent students of the labor problem thank heaven that its point of view is so sensible and kindly; for if such a book had appeared, written from an opposite point of view, it would have gone far to damage the reputation of that great body of working people on whom, more than on any other one factor, the future of this country depends.

Necessity of General Intelligence.

We cannot have a great republic with a degraded working class. We cannot have intelligent public opinion without general intelligence. The country has just reached the point of debating whether intelligent and ambitious laboring people are better than those who are possessed of only intelligence enough to do their work and only ambitious enough to make them good laborers. In short, there is serious discussion whether the democratic ideal of our fathers or the caste system of Europe produces the better results.

There are many thoughtful people who are, consciously or unconsciously, dodging this fact in their expressions of opinion on sociological matters. They had better not dodge it too long. It is time to face the problem fairly and work it out honestly, and in this process all such books as "The Woman Who Toils" are valuable for the awakening of public opinion.

It is hardly necessary to discuss the chapters of this book in detail. One need only repeat that the investigation is thorough and the descriptions well written. Now for the conclusions reached by these two thoughtful women.

Disadvantages of Women.

Mrs. Van Vorst found in her experience that women in factories were working under greater disadvantages than the men. They were given tasks which it was almost impossible to systematize, and in which there was little chance of advancement. They were required to do the thousand and one "odd jobs" in which their strength was "frittered away," as the common phrase is, without much to show for it. In a word, they occupied a position midway between that of men and that of boys or children.

This condition is, perhaps, inevitable. In the nature of things women's labor is liable to interruption and curtailment. Employers say that the chance of a woman's marrying makes it unprofitable to train her for the position that a man in her place would take. Probably this disadvantage will remain so long as women laborers are considered as a class, and so long as a woman worker is regarded as a woman first and a worker afterward.

The remedy which Mrs. Van Vorst offers for this unsatisfactory condition of things is not precisely new, but it is the best one, probably, which has yet been discovered. She says:

"The self-supporting woman should be in competition only with other self-supporting industrial units. The problem for her class will settle itself, according to just and natural laws, when the purpose of this class is equally vital to all concerned. Relief, it seemed to me, could be brought to the breadwinner by separating from her the girl who works for luxuries."

"How could this be done?"

"There is, I believe, a way in which it can be accomplished naturally. The non-self-supporting girls must be attracted into some field of work which requires instruction and an especial training, which pays them as well while calling into play higher faculties than the brutalizing machine labor.

"This field of work is industrial art; lace-making, hand-weaving, the fabrication of tissues and embroideries, goldsmithery, bookbinding, rug-weaving, wood carving, and inlaying, all the branches of industrial art which could be executed by woman in her home, all the manual labor which does not require physical strength, which would not place the woman, therefore, as an inferior in competition with man, but would call forth her taste and skill, her training and individuality, at the same time being consistent with her destiny as a woman."

The Kernel of the Nut.

In the last sentence is the kernel of the nut, the really sensible suggestion. The rest of the quotation shows the weakness of argument which might be expected from a student who is, after all, an outsider.

In the first place, the writer assumes that when this change of employment is accomplished for "the girl who works for luxuries," the self-supporting woman will stay in the factory and continue to compete with men.

In the name of common sense, why should she? Is it not quite as desirable for her to have work in which she will be at her best as for her more fortunate sister? Moreover, the woman who is self-supporting possesses precisely the qualities—determination, brains, skill, forethought—which are needed to make this artistic work contemplated a success.

There was a time when such work was done in the home. The daughters of the women who wove carpets and fine linen, made lace, embroidered gowns, became tailoresses and weavers and spinners, are the best workers in the factories and in professional life.

Moreover, these very women will gladly take up home work again, if it can be made, as suggested, to pay as well as factory labor.

Women Must Meet Conditions.

If a woman must compete with men she must work where they work and understand the conditions of her labor. If she is to occupy a field of her own it is, generally speaking, better for her to work at home.

It can readily be seen that the mother with little ones to support, through desertion or widowhood, will find home work far better, even if she earns less. The same is true of any woman with home duties of any sort. The solution of the woman problem in the labor field probably is along this line, and it may be possible to make a beginning on it now.

The man who toils uses machinery for his ends; the woman who toils, under present conditions, is too apt to become a part of the machinery, and that is not good either for her or for the next generation.

Another conclusion to which Mrs. Van Vorst comes is less sensible, and it is this which Mr. Roosevelt has seen fit to mention in his letter. She condemns in no feeble terms what she calls the "unmeasured vanity" which leads thousands of girls to enter the labor field for the sake of dressing better and possessing more luxuries than they could if supported by their parents.

Are They "American Snobs."

She calls them "the American snobs," and Mr. Roosevelt appears to have taken her conclusion for granted, without too much reflection on the conditions which have produced this class of working women.

That their presence does great harm to the self-supporting woman is certainly true, for they lower wages; but, unless labor is to be put on a personal basis, unless people are to be given work, not because they can do it well, but because they need it—a conclusion to which we are not quite ready to come as yet—it is impossible to separate these two classes of girls.

The matter is tending to settle itself by creating a state of public sentiment in which it will be considered as much a girl's duty to take care of herself, to pay her board and buy her clothes, as it is a boy's, and that will put all women workers on something like an equal footing.

The assumption of the author seems to be that girls whose parents are able to give them a bare support should not desire anything more, and that their desires for independence argues that they are responsible for the decrease in the birth rate of the native American population. In this conclusion, Mr. Roosevelt seems to agree, for he says:

"There are certain great qualities for the lack of which no amount of intellectual brilliancy, or of material prosperity, or of easiness of life can atone, and which show decadence and corruption in the nation just as much if they are produced by selfishness and coldness and ease-loving laziness among comparatively poor people as if they are produced by vicious or frivolous luxury in the rich.

"If the men of the nation are not anxious to work in many different ways, with all their might and strength, and ready and able to fight at need, and anxious to be fathers of families; and if the women do not recognize that the greatest thing for any woman is to be a good wife and mother, why, that nation has cause to be alarmed about its future."

This is good doctrine, and there is no fault to be found with it. But it is a very great blunder to assume, as more than one sociologist has done, that the woman who works is responsible for a state of things in which the American home is alleged to be decreasing in numbers. It is to be doubted, in the first place, whether it is greatly decreasing in numbers, or, if it is, whether the condition is more than temporary.

There are a good many other distinct causes which might produce such a result, besides the presence of working women in competition with men. Women have always worked for money, in their homes, and a generation ago they did a dozen things in their homes which are now done in factories. It is from necessity and not from choice that they now work outside the home.

Mr. Roosevelt himself has said that those who work neither with their brains nor with their hands are a menace to the public safety. Does this apply to only one-half of mankind? Suppose a workingman has three daughters; are all of them needed to do the housework in that one home? Is there not some spare energy which might be used in the shop to the profit of the whole family? That is the way in which the working-folk reason, and it is not a very silly way, one must confess.

Mrs. Van Vorst gives undue weight, in the first place, to the numerous statements of working women to the effect, "I don't have to work; I could have all the money I need without it, but not all that I want."

The Working Girl's Pride.

In the majority of cases this statement is due to the poor little innocent pride of the working girl who does not wish to be considered on a level with those who live from hand to mouth, and who go into the mills because they must if the family is to have food and shelter.

Would these investigating ladies themselves have felt the same if they had "had to work?" Would they not have comforted themselves with the fiction that they could have got along "somehow" without working if they had been content with mere food and shelter? If it comes to that, most of us do not "have to work" as hard as we do; but would this country be what it is if the majority of the people had been content with money enough to supply physical needs?

The owners of mills which do not pay a man wages enough to support a family of daughters, even if he wanted to, have a great deal more than all the money they need; but they do not think of distributing it among the employes. Why should they not allow the employe the same liberty of choice? Why is it a virtue in Mr. Morgan to want more money than he has, and a crime in Gretchen Hochheimer or Mattie Slocum?

Not a Serious Crime.

But, the present writer says, the working girl spends her money for clothes instead of cultivating the domestic virtues. This is another crime which is not always as black as it looks.

When the masculine mind is more attracted by the domestic virtues in a girl than by pretty clothes, it may come to pass that a maid will forget her ornaments, contrary to the shrewd saying of the prophet Jeremiah, but until that time comes the feminine mind will probably continue to value the attractions of dress as they deserve.

The prince in the fairy tale did not find Cinderella first in the chimney corner, and when a girl spends her hard earned money in the prettiest gown she can devise, and goes to a dance, she will, in nine cases out of ten, be more likely to marry than she will if she stays at home doing housework. At any rate, it is her own money that she spends, and when it comes to the effect on her character, perhaps she might as well earn the money as wheedle it out of her father or brother.

It is extremely improbable that any American girl would prefer a situation in a factory to the right kind of home with the man she loved.

Woman's Love of Independence.

The number of marriages is not likely to be seriously diminished by love of independence among women. It is true that the age of marriage among Americans is later than it was a generation ago, and later than in most foreign countries, but while this is bad in some respects, it is good in others.

Surely it is better for children to be brought up in sanitary homes and properly trained than for them to be huddled in one-room cabins and born of parents with no ideas beyond the next day's meals. The ambition of most American working-folk—and it seems pitifully reasonable and wise, considering the difficulty of attainment in some places—is to raise their families a step above those of the European peasant; to give their children the chance they themselves never had; to own their homes and have money in the bank.

The girls of a family may work when they do not need to, but oftentimes the parents, relieved of the burden of their support, lay up money or are enabled to be independent of public aid. In this day and generation there are very few workingmen whose incomes are equal to the strain of supporting grown children, and it is coming to be the understanding that girls as well as boys shall at maturity become self-supporting.

A Matter of Necessity.

Whether this is good or bad for the nation, it is a necessity, from the writer's point of view. Writers who look at this matter from the point of view of the educated classes frequently fail to see that the distance which divides the self-respecting, self-supporting artisan from the "submerged tenth" is, from a money point of view, very small. The failure of a savings bank, a long fit of illness, the death of the breadwinner, may wipe it out entirely.

The assumption of Mrs. Van Vorst is that the ambition which leads working women to aspire toward a slightly better condition of life than that to which they were born is foolish. The inference of President Roosevelt seems to be that this ambition is due to "selfishness, coldness and ease-loving laziness." Is it possible for a woman to have written this book without seeing that such ambition is all that saves the American working woman from falling into the very state of unambitious and unsensitive dullness which creates the squalor of mill towns?

Ambition which leads to selfish ends may be foolish, but surely it is better than animal self-indulgence and sloth. Is it any better, to speak plainly, for a woman to earn her own living, that she may have some of the decencies of life, than for her to dispense with those decencies, marry for the sake of support and bear children who are not so much reared as "raised like animals?"

The One Great Problem.

It is not too much to say that this is precisely the problem which confronts thousands of American girls born in the lower stratum of the laboring class. They are doing their best to solve it by demanding the right kind of homes when they marry. Until they get those homes they prefer to support themselves.

It is not a question of the number of servants to be kept. It is a question of a decent place in which to do their own housework. They have not the choice between luxury and poverty. They have the choice between poverty and semi-starvation. Some of them, perhaps, find their wage-earning position too comfortable to exchange for the duties of any home. But they are the exceptions.

The trouble with the American birth-rate is that both men and women of our race are, unconsciously perhaps, trying to save themselves and their children from dropping to the level of the Polish and Hungarian peasant. If this is selfish luxury, it is a new kind. (New York: Doubleday, Page & Co.)

THROUGH ICELAND ON A JAUNTING CAR.

"ON AN IRISH JAUNTING-CAR," by Samuel G. Bayne, is a gossipy book of travel, of a kind which was popular in the last generation, but is, unfortunately, less common in this. Perhaps the trouble has been that imitators of Bayard Taylor, Frederika Bremer and their comrades have overworked the style; but that is no reason why somebody else who is not an imitator should not employ it to advantage. Mr. Bayne's way of describing his journey is his own, and most amusing.

In spite of all the Irish literature which has been born of Hibernian migrations to England and America, the Anglo-Saxon does not know half as much of the Green Isle itself as he might profitably know. There is much that is interesting in Irish country life, even when seen by the passing traveler; and, in fact, some of the picturesque features of the country are perhaps more quickly discerned by the newcomer than by the old resident. This book is fully illustrated from photographs, and the reader will at the end feel that he has shared as much of the pleasure of the author as was communicative in print.

Travelers who have Ireland in view for their next European trip will be glad to learn that Glen Veigh, Donegal, is one of the beauty spots of Ireland. Of this region the author says:

"Lough Veigh lies to the east of the Derryveigh Mountains, occupying the opening to Glen Veigh. It is a long, narrow sheet of water; on the north side, and running into it, a rocky almost perpendicular wall rises to over 1,200 feet, covered with Alpine vegetation. Over the top of this wall several large streams fall and break into cascades as they find their way to the lake below. Back of this and framing the whole, rises the majestic Dooish, the highest ridge in the Derryveigh range, standing 2,140 feet above the tide.

"In old times I have counted a dozen eagles that built their nests on the topmost crags overhanging the water, their majestic, circling flights giving life and interest to the scene.

"The south side is a steep hill on which grow in riotous profusion the wild rose, bracken, creeping plants, ferns, lichen, moss, the primrose, the bluebell, the yellow gorse, and hazel; while in trees, it abounds in the gray birch, mountain ash, larch, yew, juniper, white-hawthorne and laburnums with their glorious rain of gold—a mass of teeming harmonies and contrasts. But by far the finest display is its panoply of purple heather, which in some places reaches a height of ten feet; nowhere else can such heather be found."

Donegal and Connemara are, as most students of Irish history know, rich in legends. Here is a scrap of Mr. Bayne's description which shows how thick tradition grows on the land of which he writes:

"Fallcarrah is the place from which you take a boat to visit Tory Island, some eight miles out in the Atlantic. It has been called 'The Sentinel of the Atlantic,' and it is well named, being the first land one sees when nearing Ireland. Its name means 'the island of towers,' and it looked from the deck of the Columbia as though it had been built up by some titanic race of old.

"It did not seem to us that it could be of much value; but it was considered important enough to fight for in the early days 'when giants were in the land.' The Book of Ballymote states that it was possessed by the Fomorians, a race of pirates and giants who inhabited Ireland twelve centuries before the Christian era.

"Their chief was 'Balor of the mighty blows,' and two of the rocks on the east coast of the island are called 'Balor's Castle' and 'Balor's Prison.' One of their number, named Conaing, erected a tower on the island, as recorded in the Book of Lecan:

The tower of the island, the island of the Tower,
The citadel of Conaing, the son of Feebar.

"It contains a portion of a round tower, built of undressed boulders of red granite. It was never more than about forty feet in height, is seventeen feet two inches in diameter, and the walls at the base are four feet three inches thick; the doorway is five and a half feet high and is eight feet from the ground. There are also ruins of two churches (a monastery having been founded here by St. Columbia) and a peculiar tau-cross."

These extracts will show what the descriptive part of the book is like. For the rest, there are numerous sprightly and amusing anecdotes of the journey and of the people scattered through its pages, and it is far from being in any respect "heavy reading."

For all that, the average reader will be likely to come to the conclusion that there is more in the history of Ireland than he ever supposed there was, and that, on the whole, it compares very favorably in point of romantic and traditional importance with the much more thoroughly discussed history of the Middle Ages in England. (New York: Harper & Bros.)